

## Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 SAM-01 /091 W

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R 111637Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 3836

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS ALGIERS 0359

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MR, FR, AG

SUBJECT: ALLEGED ANTI-FRENCH DEMONSTRATION IN NOUAKCHOTT

REF: (A) NOUAKCHOTT 0328 (B) ALGIERS 327 (NOTAL)

1. AS REQUESTED REFTEL (A) FOLLOWING IS TRANSLATION  
OF ARTICLE IN FLN'S EL MOUJAHID 8-9 FEB CONCERNING  
ALLEGED ANTI-FRENCH DEMONSTRATION IN NOUAKCHOTT:  
QUOTE: FRENCH AUTHORITIES ARE KEEPING COMPLETELY SILENT  
ON CIRCUMSTANCES AND DETAILS SURROUNDING AN ATTACK BY  
DEMONSTRATORS LAST THURSDAY AND FRIDAY NIGHT ON THE FRENCH  
EMBASSY AND FRENCH CULTURAL CENTER AT NOUAKCHOTT. IT IS  
KNOWN THAA A VIOLENT DEMONSTRATION TOOK PLACE AGAINST  
THESE LOCATIONS AND THAT DEMONSTRATORS BURNED THE EMBASSY  
AND COMPLETELY SACKED THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTER.  
OBSERVERS CONTINUE TO RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT THESE EVENTS.  
THE FRENCH EMBASSY AT NOUAKCHOTT CLAIMED THE ATTACK  
"HAS NO BEARNING ON EXISTING POLITICAL TENSION IN THE  
REGION". THIS STATEMENT IS GREETED WITH SKEPTICISM,  
SINCE IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE THAT IT WAS ANYTHING  
OTHER THAN OF POLITICAL NATURE. THE HYPOTHESIS MOST  
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ADVANCED IS THAT THE MAURITANIAN DEMONSTRATORS WHO

ATTACKED THE BUILDINGS AND PARTICULARLY THE FRENCH CULTURAL CENTER -- DESTROYING EVEN THE FURNITURE -- WERE PROTESTING THE COLLUSION OF PARIS AND NOUAKCHOTT'S LEADERS, AND THE FRENCH POLITICAL LINE IN MAURITANIA AND IN THE REGION. THIS HYPOTHESIS COULD BE SUPPORTED BY THE FRENC OFFICIAL REQUEST TO THE MAURITANIAN GOVERNMENT FOR ADDITIONAL PROTECTION OF THE VAST 25 HECTARES AREA WHICH REPRESENTS "FRENCH DIPLOMATIC TERRITORY" IN THIS CAPITAL.

ON THE OTHER HAND, A CORRELATION CAN BE EQUALLY DRAWN BETWEEN THE ANTI-FRENCH DEMONSTRATION ON FRIDAY AND A REQUEST BY NOUAKCHOTT THAT FRENCH FISHERMEN ABSTAIN "FOR SECURITY REASONS" FROM FISHING WITHIN 30 MILES (ABOUT 55 KILOMETERS) OF NOUADHIBOU SHORES. UNQUOTE. PARKER

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